

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CCO-00 (ISO) W

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Z 040510Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE FLASH 3745

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S E C R E T BANGKOK 8015

EXDIS

MILITARY ADDRESSEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: MASS, TH

SUBJECT: DISPOSITION OF FORMER GVN US-SUPPLIED AIRCRAFT

REF: BANGKOK 7989

1. BECAUSE OF THE LOSS OF TWO F-5E'S DURING MOVEMENT FROM UTAPAO TO THE MIDWAY, TRANSPORT OF ALL FORMER GVN AIRCRAFT TO THE MIDWAY HAS BEEN TERMINATED. ELEVEN F-5'S AND A NUMBER OF A-37'S REMAIN AT UTAPAO TO BE LOADED.

2. LOSS OF THESE TWO AIRCRAFT IS MOST UNFORTUNATE. I MUST STRESS, HOWEVER, THAT TERMINATION OF THE MOVEMENT OF THESE PLANES MAY WELL COST US MUCH MORE. AS MENTIONED REFTEL, DISPOSITION OF THESE PLANES IS BEING WHIPPED INTO AN EMOTIONAL FURY BY NATIONALISTIC ELEMENTS. THE ISSUE IS FAST BECOMING ONE OF THAI SOVEREIGNTY. THE ISSUE WILL BE RAISED AT THE THAI CABINET MEETING ON TUESDAY, AND CONSIDERING THE NUMBER OF WILD MEN IN THE CABINET, IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE WE WILL BE TOLD TO LEAVE THE PLANES HERE PENDING A FINAL DECISION ON THEIR DISPOSITION. A LONG AND MUTUALLY COSTLY POLITICAL CONFRONTATION WOULD RESULT.

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3. I BELIEVE STRONGLY THAT THE BEST TACTIC IS TO MOVE

QUICKLY UNDER THE RTG AUTHORITY WE STILL HAVE, LOAD
EVERYTHING WHICH CAN BE LOADED AND GET THE MIDWAY OUT
OF THAI TERRITORIAL WATERS BY AS CLOSE TO TUESDAY NOON
BANGKOK TIME AS POSSIBLE.

4. I LEAVE TO THE EXPERTS THE DECISION ON THE BEST WAY
TO MOVE THE PLANES FROM UTAPAO TO THE MIDWAY, BUT I
UNDERSTAND THERE IS A TECHNICALLY FEASIBLE METHOD BY
USING THE NORTHRUP-DESIGNED SLING, WITH WHICH WE HAVE
HAD NO TROUBLE, AND DISCONTINUE USE OF THOSE LOCALLY
PRODUCED. WHATEVER THE METHOD ADOPTED, I MOST STRONGLY
URGE THAT LOADING OF THE MIDWAY BE RESUMED IMMEDIATELY
AND THAT EVERY POSSIBLE EFFORT BE MADE TO COMPLETE THE
JOB WITHIN 48 HOURS.
MASTERS

SECRET

NNN

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